

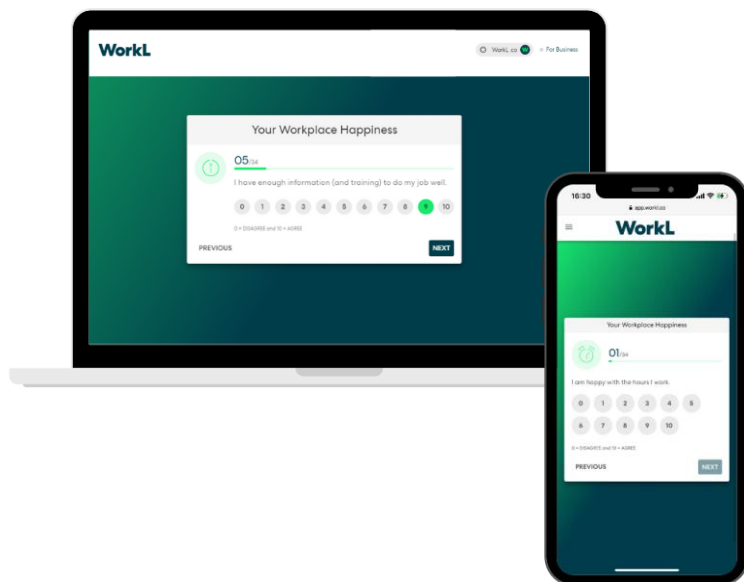
# Lockdown Lessons: Employee experience through the pandemic

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Insights from WorkL  
2020-2022



Data from this report has been collected from  
01//3/21 to 31/01/22 from ~150,000 responses











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## Key findings and Executive Summary

-  Overall happiness has increased during the pandemic, peaking in early to mid 2021
-  Technology has been the happiest industry for the most part during the pandemic
-  Disabled and LGBTQ+ have been consistently less happy throughout the past two years
-  People working from home are happier than those who continued to work in the workspace
-  In recent months, the Flight Risk and Wellbeing Risk gap between disabled and non-disabled has increased
-  There has been a narrowing of happiness for management over the past two years scoring poorly for Flight Risk, Wellbeing Risk, Net Promoter Score and overall happiness.
-  Confidence in management fell overall from August 2021 to January 2022 reflecting Management's decreasing happiness
-  Women score lower when answering if they are fairly paid, compared to men over the last two years. There are just four months in this time when women and men scored themselves the same.

### Executive Summary Lord Mark Price, WorkL Founder



WorkL's timely report reflecting on two years since the start of the global pandemic has thrown light on the impact the various lockdowns, shutting down of entire sectors and the shift to working from home, had on the workforce. Here we reflect on how our working lives have changed and identify the demographics which scored poorly whilst celebrating the sectors who have thrived and analyse how employers can improve and support workplace happiness.

This report delves into WorkL's data taken from over 100,000 individuals globally, 23,000 organisations and analyses what is making people happy at work.

I'm pleased to see overall workplace happiness has increased during the pandemic however there are some warnings that our analysis has shown.

As found in WorkL's Annual Report last year, there's a stark difference in happiness between people who are registered as disabled and those who are not. The same can be said for people who identify as LGBTQ+, with scores low across all Six Steps.

As employers grapple with the so-called 'Great Resignation', we have seen management's overall happiness decline over the past two years. In fact confidence in management fell overall from August 2021 to January this year. This is important due to the direct impact managers have on the workforce and ultimately productivity. Research shows that happy and engaged employees drive 20% improvement in profits, productivity and reduce employees' sick absence and staff turnover. Individuals who feel they have more control over their working life, well-being and environment will take more responsibility for the success of their employer. This report looks to identify lessons we all can learn from lockdowns and the switch to working from home and we also look ahead and predict the work trends of the future.

The data used in this report is from WorkL’s Workplace Happiness Test which more than 250,000 people have taken from over 23,000 organisations and 26 industries. This test gives participants a score based on six key areas. In this analysis, the results collected span from the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March 2020 to 23<sup>rd</sup> of January, 2022.

250,000+

Survey data submission on employee sentiment

26

Different industries within the sample

195

Different countries within the sample

Six Steps to Workplace Happiness

Workplace happiness is derived from a sense of ownership and control and feeling positive about the environment in which you work. Here at WorkL we breakdown this to Six Steps (see diagram below).

Six Steps to Workplace Happiness

If we compare overall happiness over the past two years we can see it has increased, peaking in early to mid 2021. Looking at different demographics we can see 45-54 year-olds have seen the highest increase in their happiness score and those with less than one year service are consistently happy, they score highest across the six steps apart from empowerment where longer serving workers score just as well if not higher.

However, those who identify as being disabled are consistently less happy and in recent months, the Flight Risk and Wellbeing Risk gap between disabled and non-disabled has increased.

Comparisons from March 2020 vs January 2022



Looking closer at ethnicity, people who are White & Black are the only ethnicities to see their happiness scores increase with Asian and Multiple Ethnic Groups seeing their scores decrease quite significantly.

From March 2020 many millions of people in the UK moved to working from home however it is important to note many frontline workers continued their normal routines in their workplace. Looking back on the past two years WorkL’s data show those who moved to working from home have been happier.

The difference in happiness between management and non-management has decreased - Management happiness has fallen (-3), whilst non-management has increased (+9)

Technology has been the happiest industry for the most part during the pandemic

Entertainment and Media industry has seen the biggest fall in happiness since the start of the pandemic

Out of the Six Steps we have seen Reward and Recognition increase most (+8) with Empowerment also scoring higher than before the start of the pandemic.

## Gender Pay Gap

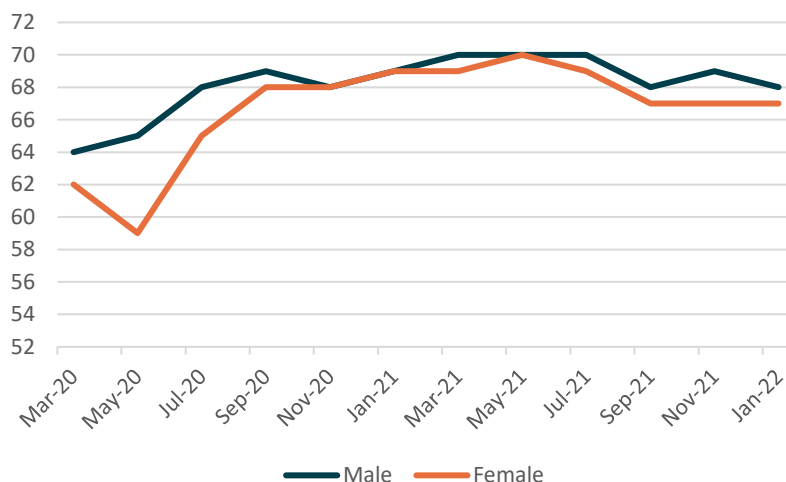
Pay plays a big part in Reward and Recognition for employees and the recent results published by the [Trade Union Congress](#) reveal that women work on average for free for two months of the year compared to men. WorkL's latest data on the question 'I am fairly paid' corroborates the results. Women score lower on this question compared to men over the last two years. There are just four months in this time when women and men scored themselves the same.

Women currently score 67% on this question compared to men scoring 68%. This is 5% higher when comparing women at the beginning of the pandemic where this score dramatically dropped to 59% in May 2020 when in contrast, men's scores rose to 65%. This can be contributed to the fact that women were the main caregivers during the pandemic, whilst also having to continue working.

### HR focus point



Survey response to: 'I am fairly paid'



## Wellbeing at Work

Employers are today well aware of the importance of wellbeing at work and how it impacts overall happiness. WorkL has recently introduced a new [Wellbeing Survey](#) which allows organisations to assess the mental, physical and financial well-being of their employees.

We are pleased to see overall Wellbeing increased by 3 points over the past two years. Could it be that the shift to working from home allowed more flexibility into people's lives helping them balance caring duties. Importantly the demise of the commute was probably the most importance factor in improving wellbeing in the workplace.

Looking at Wellbeing the biggest change we saw was in management and non-management with managers seeing a reduction (-4) in their wellbeing but non-management seeing it increase (+10).

If we look at the Wellbeing Indicator we can establish a Wellbeing Risk, this is the percentage of employees who score below 60% in an average score across the following questions:

Overall we have seen the Wellbeing Risk increase since the start of the pandemic. If we compare those who work from home to those who continued to work in the workplace we can see the Wellbeing Risk increase for those who continued to go to work.

### Wellbeing Risk Question Set

'My employer cares for my Wellbeing'

'I rarely feel anxious or depressed about work'

'I am happy (and feel safe) in my working environment'

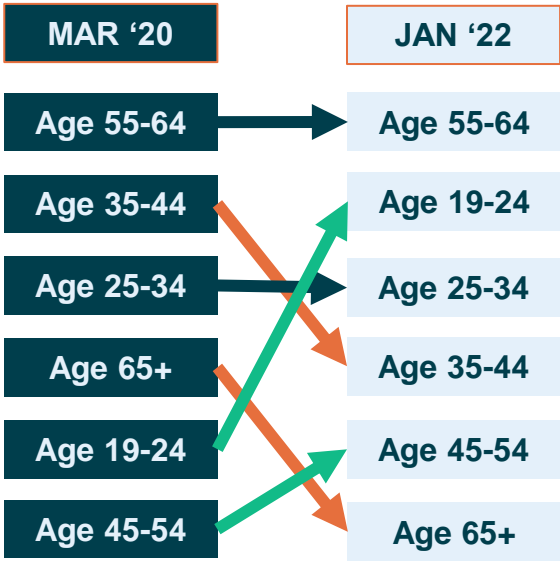
'I feel happy at work'

### HR focus point



In recent months, we have seen the Wellbeing Risk gap between disabled and non-disabled increase, a warning to employers to improve conditions for those who register as disabled.

MOST  
ENGAGED  
TO LEAST  
ENGAGED



Two demographics which have undoubtedly been hit hardest by the pandemic is 35-44 and 65+. Parents balancing home schooling and working from home were immensely effected by lockdown and isolation. Those people nearing the end of their careers were one of the hardest hit by redundancies when the pandemic first hit and have most likely found it hard to retrain or find new work.

HR focus point



It is clear that employers need to focus on continual development to retain and engage experienced staff.

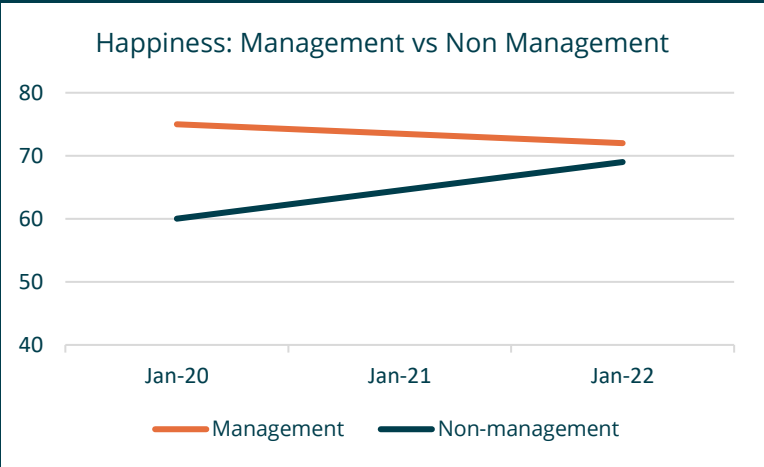


Management

We have seen Management score's across all Six Steps reduce over the pandemic, so it's no surprise to see their Wellbeing Risk increase (+5%). However, we see non-management's Wellbeing Risk decrease by a huge 18 points. Management Flight Risk has also increased by 1% from whereas Non-management decreased by 18% and Confidence in Management has dropped 3%.

Are we seeing management taking the strain and uncertainty of the past two years?

Happiness: Management vs Non Management



Flight Risk

WorkL's data identifies who is a flight risk calculated from four questions in the Workl happy at work survey which include whether employees feel they are fairly paid, whether they have a good relationship with their manager, if they enjoy their job and if they are being developed. Falling down on these key questions, scoring below 60% flags employees as a potential flight risk.

Flight Risk Question Set

- 'I am fairly paid'
- 'I have a good relationship with my manager'
- 'I enjoy my job'
- 'I am being developed'

2021 average Flight Risk Indicator Score:

27%



# Flight Risk Cont.

In recent months, the Flight Risk gap between disabled and non-disabled has increased – a worrying trend.

Again Entertainment and Media has had and continue to have one of the best Flight Risk scores throughout the pandemic however Travel & Leisure has seen a huge increase in flight risk, almost doubling - this is undoubtedly because of the enormous uncertainty the sector has faced during the pandemic.

It's good to see Female flight risk fall considerably throughout the pandemic along with those in Non-Management whose risk has significantly decreased (-18%), however Management flight risk has increased by a single point reflecting their decreasing happiness score during the pandemic.

The age group least likely to leave their jobs is 45-54 year olds whose Flight Risk has decreased the most, aligning with the increase in their overall happiness score.

Male (-6%)

Those aged from 19-64

White ethnic groups (-9%)

Those working from 1-10 years at the organization

Female (-10%)

Black, African & Caribbean ethnic groups (-13%)

Non-Management (-18%)



Decreased Flight Risk

Increased Flight Risk

Management (+1%)

Those who identify as LGBTQ+ (+1%)

Asian ethnic groups (+1%)

Arab ethnic groups (+4%)

Those registered disabled (+4%)

Those aged 65+ (+5%)

Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups (+14%)

## NPS (Net Promoter Score)

Organisations who were on the front foot and positively handled the fallout from the pandemic will most likely be recommended by their employees as a place to work.

This is WorkL's Net Promoter Score (NPS) and our data shows NPS's decreased throughout the pandemic (-5.4) even though overall happiness increased.

Male NPS decreased much more than female – have women, who arguably share more caring duties compared to men, benefited from the switch to working from home with their employers providing more flexibility?

Surprisingly Management NPS's increased even though their overall happiness, Flight Risk and Wellbeing Risk declined.

### NPS Question Set

'I would recommend my friends and family to work for my organisation'

**i** A positive NPS score means that your employees would recommend your organisation to their network, friends and family. A negative score suggests that an employee wouldn't and are not satisfied working there.

## Five Takeaways on Employee Experience:

WorkL

- 1 Employers must focus on improving management as Confidence in Management scores are problematic.



- 2 Non-management workplace happiness is improving whereas Management happiness is not.



- 4 Those who are registered disabled have been hit especially hard.



- 3 Asian and Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups scores have decreased dramatically.



- 5 Overall Workplace Happiness has increased since the beginning of the pandemic, peaking from Jan - Jul 2021.



## Five Reflections on Employee Experience:

- 1 Gender pay gap is still a concern for female employees  
Employers should address these concerns to ensure equality in the workplace.



- 2 Technology sector continues to thrive.  
Will we see other sectors rebuilding post-pandemic take top spots for employee experience?



- 4 Employers must focus on retaining and stimulating experienced staff by continual learning and development.



- 3 Managers will benefit from increased certainty which comes with the end of the pandemic.



- 5 'Great Resignation' will continue to be a top priority for employers.



## WorkL Happiness Podcast:

Coming up on WorkL's Happiness Podcast: From working in an office in the Zambian Ministry of Health, becoming the CEO of the English National Opera to fighting Climate Change, Cressida Pollock reflects on her career so far on WorkL's Happiness Podcast. The Global Curator for TED, Bruno Giussani, speaks to WorkL founder, Mark Price about his career as a journalist, working in tech and what his most memorable TED talk is.



## What's next for WorkL:

Next month WorkL is looking at how we can all benefit from better managers. We'll be asking how manager's fared during the shift to working from home and why good line managers are so important for productivity and reducing flight risk. We'll be joined by Ann Francke, of the Chartered Management Institute (CMI) and will be delving into our data.



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